



JB Pritzker, Governor
James L. Bennett, Director

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Governor Pritzker and Illinois Department of Human Rights Celebrate the 40th Anniversary of the Illinois Human Rights Act

(**Chicago**) The Illinois Department of Human Rights (IDHR), in partnership with the Illinois Human Rights Commission (HRC), celebrated the 40th Anniversary of the Illinois Human Rights Act (IHRA). The Celebration intentionally coincided with the United Nations International Human Rights Day to bring attention to the historic Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

During a widely attended reception at the Chicago Regional Carpenters Hall, IDHR Director James L. Bennett, HRC Chair Jim FergCadima and Governor JB Pritzker presented the inaugural Illinois Human Rights Awards to Illinois General Assembly veteran Barbara Flynn Currie – the chief legislative architect of the IHRA – for exemplary service advancing human rights.

Governor JB Pritzker, the keynote speaker at the event, gave an official State of State for Human Rights in Illinois where he touted several key progressive achievements made during his tenure like investing in health care access, opening opportunities for economic development, enshrining reproductive rights, and shielding the state's immigrant communities.

“It’s been forty years since Illinois established one of the nation’s most progressive approaches to human rights in the nation when it passed the Human Rights Act,” said Governor JB Pritzker. “But that achievement stands out not for its extraordinary nature, but because it’s a landmark of the exact caliber that has for so long defined Illinois’ role in bending the arc toward justice.”

“Under this prolific legislation, we protect everyone in Illinois, no matter your sex, color, sexual orientation, gender identity, immigration status, and several other protected classes,” said **IDHR Director Jim Bennett**. “The Illinois Human Rights Act is truly one of the most progressive, inclusive, and expansive pieces of legislation in the country and, here at the Department of Human Rights, we are honored to enforce, defend, and advance it every day.”

The celebration commemorated the December 6th, 1979 signing of the Illinois Human Rights Act by then-Governor James R. Thompson, creating the most expansive civil rights coverage for the people of Illinois in the history of the State of Illinois. During the event, Governor JB Pritzker issued a proclamation in support of the IHRA 40th Anniversary and International Human Rights Day in Illinois.

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